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C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 000213

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/27/2019  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [UNHRC](#) [SP](#)  
SUBJECT: SPAIN WELCOMES USG INVOLVEMENT IN DURBAN REVIEW  
CONFERENCE PREPARATORY MEETINGS

REF: SECSTATE 14201

Classified By: ADCM William H. Duncan for reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

11. (C) Poloff met with Spanish MFA Human Rights Office Director Juan Duarte Cuadrado February 24 to discuss reftel demarche and learned that Spain shares U.S. concerns regarding the draft document, particularly regarding racism issues and attempts to use defamation of religion arguments to limit freedoms of expression. Duarte opined that not much progress was made during last week's negotiations, but that the U.S. presence was extremely helpful and encouraging. Duarte further stated that although the GOS understands the challenges that lie ahead given the U.S. position, the hope is that the United States will remain engaged in the process and participate in the Durban Review Conference in April. "Continued U.S. involvement is crucial to ultimate success," he said, "which is likely to happen at the last minute, rather than in the preparatory meetings." Duarte also intimated, however, that Spain would not likely favor a walk out should negotiations fail, but rather continue searching for an acceptable compromise.

12. (C) Duarte asked about the United States' possible future participation in the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC), strongly encouraging re-engagement. He said that Spain feels confident in support for its spring 2010 candidacy to preside over the UNHRC and would enthusiastically welcome the United States at the table, adding that the 2011 HRC review will present a great opportunity for reform.  
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